

Present: Dwight Baker; Andy Bennett; Hans Brandal; John Coney; Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott; John Jensen; Sandy Paul-Lyle; Holly Plackett; Anirudh Sahni; Carla Sautler; Joan Sells, Vice-Chair; Tina Shereen; Mike Taylor, Chair

Staff: Marnie McGrath, Community Relations Planner; David Hull, Supervisor of Service Planning; Sharron Shinbo, Marketing and Development project manager; Mike Beck, Contract Administrator for Service Development

Guest: Arthur Thornbury, Legislative Analyst for the King County Council

Vice-Chair Joan Sells opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Mike Taylor chaired the meeting after he arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Update on Transit Now service implementation phasing plan

Hull presented a phasing plan for implementation of Transit Now, noting that all four elements will be addressed concurrently over the next 10 years: RapidRide, High Ridership Corridors, Rapidly Growing Areas, and Service Partnerships. Limiting factors will include vehicle availability, rate of sales tax revenue growth, maintenance base capacity, timing of technology upgrades, and service allocation by geographic areas. In the area of partnerships, King County Council just approved a partnership with Children's Hospital entailing 4500 service hours for 2007.

CAG member comments included:

- Concerns about the RapidRide schedule – Aurora Bus Rapid Transit route is dependent on construction of Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes.
- Concerns about acquiring coaches in time.
- Uncertainties about sales tax revenues.
- Rapid development creating urgent need for transit service.
- Necessity of both public involvement and public relations.

Hull offered to come back to TAC with future updates.

Bus Advertising

Shinbo provided an update on the "bus wrap" issue. Due to customer complaints, the Council recently asked Metro to discontinue advertising that entails wrapping the entire bus, including windows, in promotional materials. The program brought in \$500,000 in revenue each year. The vendor has approached Metro to propose a possible compromise that would eliminate covers on windows. This could reduce Metro's revenue by approximately half but would address customer and Council concerns.

TAC members provided numerous comments and suggestions, including:

- Could Metro increase the number of buses to make up revenue loss?
- Could Metro change from a "number" of buses to a "percentage of the fleet?" That change would allow the number of wrapped buses to increase as the fleet increases.
- Visibility is the biggest concern for passengers. Complaints are voiced every day.



- Better signs and lighting would make it easier for riders to see. Also automatic stop announcements on buses will help – good to educate the council about that.
- Concerned about signage on the front of the bus. Need to identify the fronts of the buses. On the older coaches, can't tell Metro from other fleets.
- The partial wraps may become the new standard, making it easier to sell them to advertisers.
- Based on revenue figures quoted, one wrapped day pays for 6 one-way trips.

TAC members agreed they want to discuss this further at the next meeting with the goal of writing a letter of support for partial wrapped buses.

Passenger-only Ferry Update

Beck announced that King County is proposing to establish a passenger-only ferry district and take over POF operations from the state of Washington inside King County. The ability to establish the district was authorized during the last legislative session. The King County Council would be the governing body for levying property tax up to 75 cents per thousand across all of King County (the initial tax will most likely be in the 3 or 4 cent range).

Although the initial project would focus on service to Vashon, the County will also explore passenger-only ferries on Lake Washington, and possibly serving the Des Moines community. The Elliott Bay Water Taxi would be included in the service, and the levy would provide a permanent source of funding (the water taxi has been funded through various methods over the years).

Sells noted that roads and buses are both subsidized by tax payers. It only makes sense in an island community to subsidize ferries as well. She also pointed out that the passenger-only ferries encourage commuters to leave their cars at home.

Metro will take on the job of setting up the initial POF system and will be reimbursed for expenses once the levy monies start coming in. The state is also giving \$350,000 for immediate capital costs at the terminal.

Letter of Advice on Metro Bus Advertising Policy

Hans Brandal moved, John Jensen seconded that the letter be approved as presented (see attached) and sent to Council. Passed 13 – 1.

Distribution of Passenger-Only Ferry Business Plan

TAC asked staff to send the revised passenger ferry business plan via email. Beck agreed to come back with operating and finance plans, etc.

Attendance at the Regional Transit Committee Meeting

Taylor offered to attend RTC and present letter and asked staff to confirm that May 16th meeting will be okay.



Other

Brandle announced that he needs to miss the July and August meetings, so this will be his last TAC meeting. He thanked fellow TAC members and wished them well.

Adjournment

Taylor adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.



May 8, 2007

The Honorable Reagan Dunn, Chair
Regional Transit Committee
The Honorable Julia Patterson, Vice-Chair
Regional Transit Committee
King County Courthouse
510 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: TAC Review of Metro Transit Advertising Policies

Dear Councilmembers Dunn and Patterson:

This letter responds to the Regional Transit Committee's (RTC) February 21, 2007, request that the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) review Metro Transit advertising policies and offer suggestions relating to public testimony made by Ms. Alisa Engnell against advertising for the BODIES exhibit on Metro Transit buses.

The TAC reviewed Metro's advertising policies at its March 13, 2007 meeting. Ms. Alisa Engnell attended, reiterating her objections to the exhibit and her request of the RTC that they:

1. Remove any remaining ads from Metro buses.
2. Make a public statement including:
 - The amount of money that was received through the advertising contract;
 - A description of how the money was used; and
 - An explanation of why the council considered the Bodies Exhibit to be an appropriate source of income for King County

Sharron Shinbo, Metro Program Project Manager, and Cheryl Carlson, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney then briefed the TAC on Metro Transit's current transit advertising policies and answered questions.

TAC members agreed that advertising on Metro Transit buses is protected by the first amendment and that based on Metro Transit's current advertising policies there is no basis to deny the posting of the BODIES exhibit advertisement on Metro buses.

TAC supports Metro Transit's current advertising policies and recommends to the RTC that Metro Transit continue using its existing policies to guide the use of advertising on Metro buses.



Sincerely,

Mike Taylor, Chair
King County Metro Transit Advisory Committee

Attachment A1: A public statement on the BODIES Exhibit presented to the King County Regional Transit Committee on February 21, 2007 by Alisa Engnell

Attachment A2: Ordinance No. 222-05 adopted by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Attachment B: King County Transit Advertising Rules Briefing for Transit Advisory Committee, March 13, 2007

cc: The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive
Harold S. Taniguchi, Director, King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT)
Laurie Brown, Deputy Director, KCDOT
Kevin Desmond, General Manager, Metro Transit Division, KCDOT
Betty Gullledge-Bennett, Manager, Community Relations and Communications Section, KCDOT
Sharron Shinbo, Project/Program Manager, Metro Transit Division, KCDOT
Cheryl Carlson, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Civil Division, Office of the King County Prosecutor
Alisa Engnell